

FRAUDS UPON FARMERS.

HOW AGRICULTURAL SWINDLING IS DONE IN THIS COUNTRY.

The Dishonest Schemes Described and Condemned—Hulless Oats Introduced in the West—The Effect of Bad Grain—The Taxes Caused and the Penalties.

The following interesting facts are from advance sheets of the monthly report of the department of agriculture, and should be read and analyzed:

dishonesty is not content, in these greedful days, to manufacture deceptive wares or sell adulterated goods. It leaves its accustomed city haunts, goes among the great farms which cover the surface of the country, and takes victory over the farmer. It does more: seeks to develop dishonesty among the moral weakness of the farming class.

Twenty-five million people, living in comparative isolation, industries and prospectors, present tempting inducements to men who live on the fruits of the labor of others, which have been improved for years by many laborers, and the agricultural power has exercised the tricks and frauds attempted, preventing much loss, without eradication of the evil.

There is a series of news which have been numerous, yet there is no one which has been more recent than many other embodied by the author, still more persistent under exposure, fortifying itself anew when driven from its entrenchments, if it is the fraudulent commerce in BOHEMIAN OATS.

It has been, from year to year, and extended its operations from state to state, under a galling name, and in a manner to give it a local press. As the department of agriculture, it is assumed, was created for the protection as well as the advancement of the agriculture of the United States, and has efficient machinery for obtaining the necessary facts, it has been deemed proper to inquire into the extent, the geographical distribution, of this prolific crop of fraud, for the sake of information in states and counties into which it has not yet penetrated.

There are reports of the sale of hulless oats in an extrinsic price in certain countries in Western Europe, and in America ten years ago, but the swindle does not appear to have taken root in those localities. In its more recent development, it is reported on good authority to have been imported into Canada about the year 1850 and planted in northern lands, to 12° of latitude, where it has remained, and has attained a particularly vigorous growth. It was early exposed, driven to western, to central, and southern countries, and it soon reached the ports of Indiana and Michigan, and, as far north as Peoria, Illinois, and New York. During five years it has made its way into every western state and made local incursions southward into Kentucky, Tennessee, and is beginning to be heard of in the eastern states.

In the March circular were included inquiries whether the Bohemian oats had been introduced, whether sold by agents of seed companies, or by individuals, their quality and productiveness, and all the other frauds had been practiced by adventurers claiming to be agents for the sale of goods assumed to be desirable.

Correspondents report the attempt, in some form, to sell this grain at exorbitant prices in twenty-five states, and the presence of the agents of the organized swindle in eighteen. Ohio is the center of the infection, reported having been received from forty-two counties. Indiana has reported operations in twenty-four counties; from Michigan come reports from sixteen counties, mostly in the southern part of the state, most of them among the richest and most populous in the state, and in counties in different parts of Illinois.

In Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa agents have appeared at fewer points, and only a few ordinary, foray has as yet been made in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Dakota, on the west, and into Kentucky and Tennessee southward. Agents have appeared in several counties in western New York (ten are reported) and in Pennsylvania, and in the state of Oneida, One is reported in New London, Conn., and one in Wauke, Me. Altogether there are 130 counties where this fraud is reported, and more, and indeed probable, that a complete report would reveal its existence in 300 counties.

The mode of operating has been exposed so thoroughly and in so many places that it would suffice to describe it, and yet the truth is often better known than is known in many districts, especially in the south, which may soon be invaded by an army of depredateurs.

The Lightning-Rod Men. The Lightning-Rod Men are already infamous; it would require further time and prove a difficult undertaking, yet it is claimed that in some counties they would reach \$100,000. Probably \$100,000 would not cover them in Ohio, and possibly the sum would be even greater in the south, where a single man can make several hundred thousand dollars. A loss of \$100 by one man is common, and some cases are reported of \$1,000.

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The first Potomac of the season was caught at Laurel, Del., by the Finance Brother, and was condemned. Wm. Scott, R. A. Golden purchased it for \$4.05.

The Lightning-Rod Men.

Not long since, a repeater of lightning rods, who was at the time engaged in putting up additional lightning rods on the Washington monument at the national capital, told me he had sold his business to a man from Baltimore—the latter being a man of means, and a man of influence, and a man of great wealth, and that he had sold his business to him for \$100,000.

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